

COVID-19 Staff Risk Assessment

This COVID-19 staff risk assessment tool has been developed by Bath and North East Somerset Council using national government guidance and information provided by the National Health Service. It is intended as a guide for employers to use to assess any staff members' level of risk to developing serious illness when infected with COVID-19. The tool offers actions that employers and staff can take to reduce this risk to as low as is reasonably practicable.

Please be aware this tool should only be used as an **example** of how you can risk assess staff and **should not be used as a replacement for a thorough workplace risk assessment**. It is the employer's responsibility to identify and communicate all risks to a staff member's health, safety and wellbeing and these should also be considered when identifying actions to protect individual staff. Additional risks not mentioned in this risk assessment may include the risk of exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace, previous mental health concerns and anxiety.

How to use this tool

This tool should be used and filled out by the employer and staff together and any actions taken should be collaborative and mutually agreed. The tool asks several questions about the member of staff that are designed to identify whether they are at higher risk of developing serious illness following an infection with COVID-19. It asks questions about the staff's age, gender, ethnicity, health, household and vaccination status as all these factors may increase their own or other's risk of severe illness. Please be aware that your staff member may want or need to consult their GP about the health conditions listed. To use this tool, please work through the following three steps:

- 1. Check your risk:** Complete the questions on page 2 and add up your employee's score in the far-right column.
- 2. Understand your risk:** Using the score and considering any other factors which may put your employee's wellbeing at risk, identify your employee's level of risk to developing serious illness from COVID-19 using the grid on pages 3-7. Please be aware the levels of risk are separated into 3 broad pragmatic groups and it is the employer's responsibility to consider additional risks which may be unique to the employee or workplace such as the risk of exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace, previous mental health concerns and anxiety.
- 3. Identify actions:** Using the grid on pages 3-7 and communicating with your employee, identify a set of mutually agreed actions (page 8) that can be taken to manage the employee's risk to being infected with COVID-19 in the workplace. Any control measures put in place should be included in your company's risk assessment – [please visit HSE for more information on workplace risk assessments](#). Please be aware the recommendations are subject to change. To read the most up-to-date coronavirus guidance, including who can and cannot attend the workplace, please follow [current coronavirus restrictions](#).

Risk Factor	Score	✓ / X
Age – the risk of mortality or being hospitalised due to COVID-19 is greater for those who are older		
Are you 50-59 years old?	1	
Are you 60-69 years old?	2	
Are you 70 years old or over?	4	
Sex at birth – the risk of mortality or being hospitalised due to COVID-19 is greater for those who are male		
Are you male?	1	
Ethnicity – COVID-19 may have a bigger impact on some ethnic groups		
Do you identify as one of the BAME or mixed-race groups listed below*?	1	
Existing health conditions – the risk of mortality or being hospitalised due to COVID-19 is greater for those who have a pre-existing health condition		
Are you at higher risk to getting severely ill from COVID-19? Visit the NHS website if you're unsure or see appendix A on pages 9-11.	4	
Other people in your household – those living or caring for someone who is at higher risk to getting severely ill from COVID-19 should consider taking extra precautions.		
Are you living with someone who is at higher risk to getting severely ill from COVID-19 (this includes people over 70 and pregnant women)? Visit the NHS website if you're unsure or see Appendix A on pages 9-11.	3	
COVID-19 vaccination - the risk of mortality or being hospitalised due to COVID-19 is greater for those who have not been vaccinated		
If you have not received any dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, please tick this box.	3	
If you have received your first dose more than 22 days ago but not your second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, please tick this box.	2	
If you've received both doses of the COVID-19 vaccine but not your booster, please tick this box.	1	
Total score		

*Mixed\Multiple ethnic groups (White and Black Caribbean; White and Asian; White and Black African; Other Mixed), Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani, Black African, Black Caribbean, other ethnic group (Asian other; Black other; Arab; other ethnic group). N.B. People with Chinese origin are not at increased risk according to the latest [ONS report](#).

Total score		
<p>Lower risk 0-2</p> <p>Continue to work following all recommended COVID-19 secure practices. See Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance and Coronavirus: how to stay safe and help prevent the spread. In summary, these measures include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimising the number, proximity and duration of social contacts. • Wearing a face covering in most public indoor settings (unless exempt). We also encourage you to wear a face covering in crowded and enclosed places where you may come into contact with people you do not normally meet – see here for government guidance on face coverings. • Ensuring frequent hand and surface hygiene • Ventilating the workspace by opening doors and windows and/or using mechanical ventilation (including air conditioning) and filtration units. • Staying at home and arranging testing (by calling 119) if any of the following symptoms emerge: new continuous cough, high temperature or loss/change in sense of smell or taste. See more information about when and how to self-isolate. 	<p>Medium risk 3-5</p> <p>As per the recommendations for “lower risk” with the following additions:</p> <p>Continue to work following current coronavirus restrictions.</p> <p>Examples of additional precautions that can be taken in the workplace include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wearing a face covering (see section 1) • Heightening ventilation measures (see section 2) • Heightening hand and surface hygiene measures (see section 3) • Limiting contact between vulnerable/higher risk employees and employees who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ have been identified as a close contact of a positive case (in the last 10 days) <i>and/or</i> ○ have recently tested positive and have ended isolation before the 10-day period is over due to testing negative twice on a lateral flow test. <p>Section 1. Wearing a face covering – guidance taken from government guidance on face coverings and working safely in the workplace.</p>	<p>Higher risk 6 or more</p> <p>As per the recommendations for “lower” and “medium” risk with the following additions:</p> <p>Continue to work following current coronavirus restrictions.</p> <p>The employer should regularly review the company’s risk assessment and the employee and employer should work together to identify a set of mutually agreed actions that can be taken to minimise the employee’s risk. Examples of adjustments include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider whether public transport/rush hour can be avoided through adjustments to work hours. • Consider moving staff to an area with reduced contact with members of the public and/or other staff. • Avoiding any tasks or roles where people come into close contact for extended periods of time. • Ensuring the workspace is well ventilated by seating ‘higher risk’ individuals near to windows and doors and/or using mechanical ventilation (including air conditioning) and/or filtration units. • Regular rapid testing of employees

- Get [vaccinated for COVID-19](#) when it is offered to you, including the booster vaccine. The COVID-19 vaccines have been shown to: (1) reduce your risk of getting seriously ill or dying from COVID-19; (2) reduce your risk of catching or spreading COVID-19; and (3) protect against COVID-19 variants. There is still a chance you might still get or spread COVID-19 even if you have had the vaccine, so it's important to follow advice about [how to avoid catching and spreading COVID-19](#).
- If you have no symptoms of COVID-19, you are encouraged to access [regular rapid testing](#) (see below).

COVID-19 testing for people without symptoms:

Around 1 in 3 people with COVID-19 do not have any symptoms. This means they could be spreading the virus without knowing it.

Everyone should get into the habit of testing regularly with a lateral flow test. You should take a lateral flow test on days when you're more likely to catch or spread COVID-19. For example, you should do a test before you mix with others in crowded indoor places.

Lateral flow testing is available for free for everyone.

Face coverings protect the wearer and others against the spread of infection because they cover the nose and mouth, which are the main confirmed sources of transmission of virus that causes COVID-19 infection.

From 10 December 2021, it became a legal requirement to wear a face covering in most indoor settings, unless [exempt](#). Face coverings must be worn by staff working in settings where the public are required to wear face coverings and where staff come into direct contact with the public.

For other indoor settings, employers should consider whether to ask their staff, customers or visitors to wear a face covering as part of their health and safety risk assessment. Employers should also be aware that staff may choose to wear a face covering in the workplace even if not required, and should be supported to do so, particularly if the staff member is at higher risk to getting severely ill from COVID-19.

Please be aware face coverings are not a replacement for the other ways of managing risk, including minimising time spent in contact, using fixed teams and partnering for close-up work, and increasing hand and surface washing. These other measures remain the best ways of managing risk in the workplace

- Limiting contact between vulnerable/higher risk employees and employees who:
 - have been identified as a close contact of a positive case (in the last 10 days) e.g. adjusting tasks and roles *and/or*
 - have recently tested positive and have ended isolation before the 10-day period is over due to testing negative twice on a lateral flow test.

For more information about mitigating risk in the workplace, see [guidance on working safely during COVID-19](#). The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has also published guidance on [protecting vulnerable workers](#), including advice for employers and employees on [how to talk about reducing risks in the workplace](#).

If you have concerns about your health and safety at work then you can raise them with your workplace union, HSE or your local authority. Where employers are not managing the risk of COVID-19, HSE and local authorities will take action which can range from the provision of specific advice, issuing enforcement notices, stopping certain work practices until they are made safe and, where businesses fail to comply with enforcement notices, this could lead to prosecution.

To find out more about how you can access a rapid test, please visit <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19-latest-information-and-advice/rapid-lateral-flow-testing-everyone>.

If you want to know more about rapid tests, who can take the tests, and what happens if you test positive, please read these FAQs: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/understanding-lateral-flow-antigen-testing-for-people-without-symptoms>

If you have any further questions, please email B&NES Council Public Health team at public_health@bathnes.gov.uk

and government would therefore not expect to see employers relying on face coverings as risk management for the purpose of their health and safety assessments.

Employers should support their workers in using face coverings safely if they choose to wear one. This means telling workers:

- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser before putting a face covering on, and after removing it.
- When wearing a face covering, avoid touching your face or face covering, as you could contaminate them with germs from your hands.
- Change your face covering if it becomes damp or if you've touched it.
- Change and wash your face covering daily.
- If the material is washable, wash in line with manufacturer's instructions. If it's not washable, dispose of it carefully in your usual waste.
- Minimise the number, proximity and duration of social contacts.

Please be mindful that the wearing of a face covering may inhibit communication with people who rely on lip reading, facial

The existing employment rights framework provides protections against discrimination, unfair dismissal and detriment. Specific guidance has been published for employers and workers on [work absences due to coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#).

expressions and clear sound.

Section 2. Ventilating the workspace

Ventilating the workspace is a mandatory element of COVID-secure measures that should be implemented and monitored in all indoor workplaces. However, extra care should be taken to ensure individuals in this category are able to work in a well-ventilated area.

Good ventilation can be different for areas depending on how many people are in there, how the space is being used, and the layout of the area. Therefore, you will need to consider the ventilation requirements in the area you are considering.

Some examples of increasing ventilation in the workplace include opening doors and windows, mechanical ventilation (including air conditioning) and filtration units.

[Read advice on air conditioning and ventilation from HSE.](#)

Section 3. Heightening hand and surface hygiene measures

See [guidance on cleaning in non-healthcare settings outside the home](#)

See HSE's [guidance on cleaning, hygiene and handwashing to reduce COVID-19 transmission](#)

If you are unsure of any of the information provided in this document, please visit <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus> or email B&NES Council Public Health public_health@bathnes.gov.uk.

Following your discussions with your employee, record the agreed plan and ensure you set a time for review.

What reasonable adjustments have been identified and taken to mitigate your employee's identified risks?

.....
.....
.....
.....

Signed and date (employer/manager)

.....

Signed and date (employee)

.....

Date adjustments were introduced

.....

Date for review (This may be time based or instigated by an event that impacts on your circumstances)

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Appendix A

Who is at high risk from coronavirus (COVID-19)

Coronavirus (COVID-19) can make anyone seriously ill. But for some people, the risk is higher.

Some people who are considered at high risk from COVID-19 are eligible for a booster vaccine dose or a 3rd dose of a vaccine.

People who are at high risk and eligible for a booster vaccine dose

People aged 16 and over with a health condition that puts them at high risk of getting seriously ill from COVID-19 are eligible for a booster vaccine dose.

These conditions include:

- long-term lung conditions (such as severe asthma, COPD, bronchiectasis and cystic fibrosis)
- long-term conditions affecting the heart or blood vessels (such as congenital heart disease, heart failure and peripheral arterial disease)
- long-term kidney disease
- long-term liver conditions (such as cirrhosis and hepatitis)
- conditions affecting the brain or nerves (such as dementia, Parkinson's disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis, epilepsy, cerebral palsy or stroke)
- severe or multiple learning disabilities
- Down's syndrome
- diabetes
- problems with the spleen or the spleen has been removed (splenectomy)
- severe obesity (a BMI of 40 or above)

- severe mental conditions (such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder)
- a condition or treatment that makes you more likely to get infections
- a condition your doctor advises puts you at high risk

[Find out more about the COVID-19 booster vaccine](#)

People who have a weakened immune system and are eligible for a 3rd dose

A 3rd dose of a COVID-19 vaccine is being offered to people aged 12 and over who had a weakened immune system when they had their first 2 doses.

This includes people who had or have:

- a blood cancer (such as leukaemia or lymphoma)
- a weakened immune system due to a treatment (such as steroid medicine, biological therapy, chemotherapy or radiotherapy)
- an organ or bone marrow transplant
- a condition that means you have a very high risk of getting infections
- a condition or treatment your specialist advises makes you eligible for a 3rd dose

[Find out more about the COVID-19 vaccine 3rd dose for people with a weakened immune system](#)

Advice if you're at high risk

People at high risk from COVID-19 are advised to follow the same guidance as everyone else.

You are no longer advised to stay at home (shield). But there are still things you can do to help keep yourself safe.

[Read more about advice for people at high risk from COVID-19](#)

Important: Clinically extremely vulnerable

People are no longer being called clinically extremely vulnerable.

Some people who were previously considered clinically extremely vulnerable are still considered at high risk from COVID-19.

[Read the guidance for people previously considered clinically extremely vulnerable on GOV.UK](#)

The information above was taken from <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/people-at-higher-risk/who-is-at-high-risk-from-coronavirus/> on 20/12/21